

AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES

American Citizens Services Newsletter

U.S. EMBASSY LA PAZ, BOLIVIA

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2006

As a service to U.S. citizens in or traveling to Bolivia, we are distributing a (nearly) monthly American Citizen Services newsletter for U.S. citizens. Through this American Citizens Services newsletter, the Consular Section provides information pertaining to consular procedures, policies, and other topics of general interest to U.S. citizens in Bolivia who have registered with the American Citizens Services (ACS) Unit and provided an email address.

If you believe others would benefit from receiving this newsletter, please forward it to them and encourage them to subscribe. To subscribe to our monthly newsletter and receive other updates, please register online by following this link:

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/> or

<http://lapaz.usembassy.gov/english/consular/ACS.htm#registration>

If you do not wish to receive this monthly newsletter, or would like to be removed from our email list, please email us at consularlapaz@state.gov or USCit.Services.Bolivia@gmail.com, our Internet email address exclusively for U.S. citizen services.

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REQUEST YOUR ABSENTEE BALLOT AND VOTE NOW

As of August 24, 2006, there were only 75 days until the general elections on November 7. The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) recommends requesting your absentee ballot by September and mailing your absentee ballot no later than October 15 to ensure timely receipt. To assist U.S. citizens wishing to vote absentee, the U.S. Embassy and consular agencies have postage-paid Federal Post Card Application forms for voter registration and absentee ballots. These forms may also be downloaded from the FVAP Web site, WWW.FVAP.GOV. For more details, please see [below](#).

LIMITED SERVICES AT U.S. CONSULAR AGENCY SANTA CRUZ SEPTEMBER 4-15, 2006

Due to the absence of the consular agent in Santa Cruz from September 4-15, that consular agency will offer only limited consular services. Persons applying for passports or Consular Reports of Birth Abroad or seeking notarial services during this timeframe should seek these services at the U.S. Embassy in La Paz or the U.S. consular agency in Cochabamba. We regret any inconvenience this may cause. For more information on the range and hours of services normally provided at our consular agencies, please see [below](#).

TOWN HALL MEETING IN LA PAZ SEPTEMBER 15

All U.S. citizens and in particular our wardens are cordially invited to a Town Hall/Warden Meeting in La Paz on September 15 at 1600/4:00PM. The "keynote" speaker for this meeting will be our new Deputy Chief of Mission, Kris Urs. We plan to hold this meeting at the U.S. Embassy auditorium unless a larger venue is needed to accommodate everyone; please directly contact us at USCit.Services.Bolivia@gmail.com so we know how many to anticipate and if we need a larger venue. We hope to host similar meetings in other cities in the near future.

TOWN HALL MEETING IN SANTA CRUZ SEPTEMBER 22

In conjunction with the inauguration of the U.S. booth at ExpoCruz on September 22, all U.S. citizens and in particular our wardens are cordially invited to a Town Hall/Warden Meeting in Santa Cruz on September 22 at 1730/5:30PM. The "keynote" speaker for this meeting will be our new Deputy Chief of Mission, Kris Urs. We plan to hold this meeting at the U.S. consular agency unless a larger venue is needed to accommodate everyone; please directly contact us at **USCit.Services.Bolivia@gmail.com** so we know how many to anticipate and if we need a larger venue. We hope to host similar meetings in other cities in the near future.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT ON CIVIL AVIATION

Reflecting new airline security rules, the Department of State on August 10 issued a Public Announcement on Civil Aviation. The text of that announcement is printed below for your reference:

This Public Announcement alerts Americans to the Government of the United Kingdom's August 10, 2006 announcement that it has heightened security at all U.K. airports due to the arrest of several terror suspects, who were reportedly planning to place explosives on commercial air flights. Information periodically is updated by the U.K. Department for Transport (www.dft.gov.uk) and the British Airport Authority (www.baa.co.uk). The U.S. Embassy in London also maintains a website at <http://london.usembassy.gov>. Americans with immediate travel plans into or out of the United Kingdom should contact their respective airlines before traveling to the airport. Due to

the delays and flight cancellations, U.S. Officials have been cautioned to avoid transiting through U.K. airports at this time. This Public Announcement expires August 31, 2006.

The government of the United Kingdom announced on August 10, 2006 that it has heightened security at all U.K. airports due to the arrest of several terror suspects, who were reportedly planning to place explosives on commercial air flights. As a result of these arrests, the threat level in the U.K. has been raised to critical, reflecting the belief that an attack may be imminent. In the United States, the Department of Homeland Security has also raised the threat level to high for all commercial flights operating in or coming to the United States. The situation remains fluid and is being covered widely by British and international media. Information periodically is updated by the U.K. Department for Transport (www.dft.gov.uk) and the British Airport Authority (www.baa.co.uk). The U.S. Embassy in London also maintains a website at <http://london.usembassy.gov>.

Americans with immediate travel plans into or out of the United Kingdom should contact their respective airlines before traveling to the airport. Heightened security in other countries may cause delays in other flights from Europe to the United States. American citizens are advised to anticipate stringent security measures and cooperate fully with authorities. For the latest travel and safety information, Americans living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor local media and the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs Internet website at travel.state.gov. The Homeland Security website also provides information at www.dhs.gov. Travelers should also check the Transportation Security Administration website at www.tsa.gov.

U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to maintain a high level of vigilance, be aware of local events, and take the appropriate steps to bolster their personal security. For additional information, please refer to "A Safe Trip Abroad" found at <http://travel.state.gov>.

U.S. Government facilities worldwide remain at a heightened state of alert. These facilities may temporarily close or periodically suspend public services to assess their security posture. In those instances, U.S. embassies and consulates will make every effort to provide emergency services to U.S. citizens. Americans abroad are urged to monitor the local news and maintain contact with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

As the Department continues to develop information on any potential security threats to U.S. citizens overseas, it shares credible threat information through its consular information program documents, available on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the U.S. or outside the U.S. and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444.

AUGUST 11 PRESS RELEASE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERIC TRAVEL INITIATIVE PROPOSED RULES

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Department of State issued a joint press release on August 11 concerning the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative. The full text of that release is printed below for your reference. The press release includes basic information on the proposed rules for travel documents to enter the U.S. as well as the public comment period for the proposed rules, scheduled to take effect on January 8, 2007. The Department of State anticipates an increase in demand for passport services as part of this requirement, and all non-emergency passports received at overseas posts are processed in the United States. We thus recommend that persons with passports expiring in the next two years apply early to renew those passports in order to receive the new passports in a timely manner. For more information on passport renewal procedures, please visit our Web site at <http://lapaz.usembassy.gov/english/consular/ACS.htm>. Additional information on the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative may be found at the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Department of State Web site, www.travel.state.gov.

Office of the Press Secretary

Contact: (202) 282-8010

August 11, 2006

Today, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. Department of State (State) announced the proposed requirement, with some exceptions, for citizens of the United States, Canada, Mexico, and British Overseas Territory of Bermuda to present a passport to enter the United States when arriving by air or sea from any part of the Western Hemisphere beginning January 8, 2007.

A second proposed rule will be published at a later date proposing certain requirements for those travelers entering the United States through a land border crossing beginning January 1, 2008. The land border rule will also address document requirements for ferry passengers, U.S. citizen members of the armed forces on active duty, and for vessels used exclusively for pleasure and not for the transportation of persons or property for compensation or hire.

Together, these two proposed rules set forth the requirements of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI). WHTI is the government's plan to implement a provision of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act signed into law in 2004 which requires that by January 1, 2008 all citizens of the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda, have a passport or other accepted document that establishes the bearer's identity and nationality to enter or re enter the United States from within the Western Hemisphere.

DHS and the Department of State are providing the public with an opportunity to comment on the proposed rules and enable them to meet the proposed requirements. The proposed timeline and requirements would be as follows:

- January 8, 2007 – Passports, Merchant Mariner Document (MMD) or NEXUS Air cards would be required for all air travel, and most commercial sea travel, from within the Western Hemisphere for citizens of the United States, Canada, Mexico,

and Bermuda. This is a change from the previously scheduled date of January 1, in order to accommodate holiday travel.

- January 1, 2008 – The statutory deadline for all Western Hemisphere travel, including land border travel. Passports or other accepted documents determined to sufficiently denote identity and citizenship will be required for anyone crossing at a land border, as well as air and sea.

In addition to the passport, two other proposed travel documents that sufficiently denote identity and citizenship for the air and sea environment include the Merchant Mariner Document (MMD) and the NEXUS Air card. The MMD or “z card” is issued by the U.S. Coast Guard to merchant mariners and the NEXUS Air card is issued to citizens of Canada and the United States, lawful permanent residents of the United States and permanent residents of Canada. The NEXUS Air card may only be accepted when used in conjunction with the NEXUS Air program. The MMD card may only be accepted when used on official maritime business.

To provide vital information to the general public, the Departments of Homeland Security and State are issuing this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). This follows an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) published in the Federal Register on September 1, 2005. Public comments from the ANPRM are discussed in this NPRM. The Department of Homeland Security is issuing an economic assessment of the proposed rule for air and sea. The public may provide input and/or comment on both the proposed rule and the economic assessment on or before September 24, 2006.

Those wishing to comment on the proposed rule may access the Federal e Rulemaking Portal at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/06-6854.htm> and follow the instructions for submitting comments. Submissions must include the agency name and docket number CBP 2006-0097.

For more information, visit www.dhs.gov or www.travel.state.gov.

Related Information

- [Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative - The Basics](#) (PDF, 2 pages - 1.37 MB)

Department of State Starts Issuing Tourist E-Passports

On August 14, 2006, the Department of State issued the following press release:

To enhance border security and to facilitate travel, the Department of State began issuing Electronic Passports (e-passports) to the public today. Production has started at the Colorado Passport Agency and will be expanded to other production facilities over the next few months.

Consistent with globally interoperable specifications adopted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), this next generation of the U.S. passport includes biometric technology. A contactless chip in the rear cover of the passport will contain the same data as that found on the biographic data page of the passport (name, date of birth, gender, place of birth, dates of passport issuance and expiration, passport number), and will also include a digital image of the bearer's photograph.

The Department of State has employed a multi-layered approach to protect the privacy of the information and to mitigate the chances of the electronic data being skimmed (unauthorized reading) or eavesdropped (intercepting communication of the transmission of data between the chip and the reader by unintended recipients). Metallic anti-skimming material incorporated into the front cover and spine of the e-passport book prevents the chip from being skimmed, or read, when the book is fully closed; Basic Access Control (BAC) technology, which requires that the data page be read electronically to generate a key that unlocks the chip, will prevent skimming and eavesdropping; and a randomized unique identification (RUID) feature will mitigate the risk that an e-passport holder could be tracked. To prevent alteration

or modification of the data on the chip, and to allow authorities to validate and authenticate the data, the information on the chip will include an electronic signature (PKI).

The Department of State is confident that the new e-passport, including biometrics and other improvements, will take security and travel facilitation to a new level.

For more information about the Electronic Passport, please visit the Bureau of Consular Affairs' website at <http://travel.state.gov>.

THE CHILDREN'S PASSPORT ISSUANCE ALERT PROGRAM

The U.S. Embassy in La Paz is currently assisting several parents who reported that their children had been abducted to or within Bolivia in violation of U.S. custody orders. We therefore wish to ensure that all parents of U.S. citizen children are aware of the Department of State's Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program, which either parent may utilize. The following information is taken from the Department of State Web site, www.travel.state.gov, which contains additional information on child abduction and how to prevent that.

The Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program is a service for the parents and legal guardians of minor children. It enables the Department of State's Office of Children's Issues to notify a parent or court ordered legal guardian, when requested, before issuing a U.S. passport for his or her child. The parent, legal guardian, legal representatives, or the court of competent jurisdiction must submit a written request for entry of a child's name into the program to the Office of Children's Issues.

Passport Issuance to Children Under Age 18

On July 2, 2001, the Department of State began implementation of a new law regarding the passport applications of minor U.S. citizens under the age of 14. A person now applying for a passport for a child under 14 must show that both parents consent to the issuance or that the applying parent has sole authority to obtain the passport. Passport

applications made in the U.S. and at consular offices abroad will both be covered by the new law. Exceptions to this requirement may be made in special family circumstances or exigent circumstances necessitating the immediate travel of the child.

Once a passport is issued, its use is not tracked or controlled by the Department of State. There are no exit controls for American citizens leaving the United States. If you believe that your child may be abducted internationally, immediately contact the Office of Children's Issues and inform appropriate law enforcement officials.

Information regarding the issuance of a passport to a minor is available to either parent, regardless of custody rights, as long as the requesting parents' rights have not been terminated. The Department of State's Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program is a program to alert us when an application for a United States passport is made. This is not a program for tracking the use of a passport. This program can be used to inform a parent or a court when an application for a United States passport is executed on behalf of a child. The alert program generally remains in effect until each child turns 18. It is very important that parents keep us informed in writing of any changes to contact information and legal representation. Failure to notify CA/OCS/CI of a current address may result in a passport issuance for your child without your consent.

Office of Children's Issues

Toll Free Phone from within the U.S.: 1-888-407-4747 (8 a.m. - 8 p.m.)

Phone: (202) 736-9090

Adoption Office Fax: (202) 736-9080

Abduction Office Fax: (202) 736-9133

To contact us by e-mail:

For international parental child abduction and adoption country-specific information: Ask CI@state.gov

For Hague adoption implementation information:

AdoptionUSCA@state.gov

Department of State
Office of Children's Issues
SA-29
2201 C Street, NW
U.S. Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

FEDERAL BENEFITS QUERIES DIRECTLY TO BUENOS AIRES

Citing strictly personal reasons, long-time ACS Assistant Lili Tornee, who previously handled Federal Benefits queries and Social Security Administration (SSA) cases/applications, left us effective May 19. We wish her and her family the best of luck in their new ventures. Until her successor is chosen and receives SSA training, please direct all Federal benefits inquiries, including pending or new Social Security matters, to the Federal Benefits Unit of the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, at email buenosaires-fbu@state.gov, telephone 0054-1-157-77-4510, or through their web site at

http://buenosaires.usembassy.gov/federal_benefits2.html.

That office includes two SSA employees who can provide more immediate assistance on SSA and other Federal benefits matters. For ACS assistance not related to Federal benefits, please contact your nearest ACS office by email at

USCIT.SERVICES.BOLIVIA@GMAIL.COM or by telephone: in La Paz, (2)216-8297; in Cochabamba, (4)425-6714 or (4)411-6313; in Santa Cruz, (3)351-3477 or (3)351-3480.

U.S. VOTING INFORMATION FOR 2006-2007 ELECTIONS

The U.S. 2006 mid-term elections are already underway, with the first primaries held in March. At stake are all 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, 33 Senate seats, 37 state governorships, and thousands of state and local initiatives. To assist overseas voters concerning these upcoming elections, the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) has provided an updated Voting Assistance Guide for 2006-2007. We have distributed copies of that publication to the consular agencies in Cochabamba and Santa Cruz, the American Cooperative School in La Paz, the U.S. Commercial Library at the U.S. Embassy (open to the public 0900 to 1200 and 1500 to 1700, Monday

through Friday except local and U.S. holidays), and the wardens outside of La Paz. Please note that the standard voter registration and absentee ballot application are available on line at www.fvap.gov as well as at the American Citizens Unit here in La Paz and our consular agencies in Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. All U.S. voting information and forms provided by the Federal Voting Assistance Program is also available on the Web at www.fvap.gov.

NO MORE 48-PAGE PASSPORTS

The Department of State has advised overseas posts that 48-page passport books will no longer be printed. Instead, to meet the approximately 300% increase in demand for U.S. passports worldwide only 24-page passports will be printed even as the Department of State continues to implement the electronic passport, which will be available in a 52-page book. U.S. citizens needing additional pages may file that request, free of charge, at the nearest consular office. Please note that visa pages may be added only to current passports in good condition. For more details, please consult our website, [HTTP://LAPAZ.USEMBASSY.GOV/ENGLISH/CONSULAR/SERVICES.HTM](http://lapaz.usembassy.gov/english/consular/services.htm).

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS) TAX FORMS AVAILABLE ON LINE

The American Citizen Services Unit has received a limited supply of Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax forms for preparing 2005 tax returns. All forms will be available first online at <http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html>. Please note that the Consular Section cannot provide U.S. taxpayer assistance, specifically in preparing tax returns. Rather, all queries should be directed to the IRS using the contact information listed below.

IRS CONTACT INFORMATION

The IRS has a significant amount of information available online, including all needed forms. As there is no one at the Consular Section who can answer tax questions, please refer to the following sources of information:

- IRS Home Page: <http://www.irs.gov>
- Citizens Abroad:

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=97324,00.html>

-- Persons in the Military

<http://www.irs.gov/individuals/military/index.html>

-- Tax Forms and Publications

<http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html>

-- Electronic Payment Website: <http://www.eftps.gov>

-- Refund Information: Go to <http://www.irs.gov>, click on "Where's my refund?"

-- Tax Law Questions: Go to <http://www.irs.gov>, click on "help" in the top menu, click on "Tax Law Questions"

IRS PHONE SERVICES

-- Individuals: 1-800-829-1040

-- Businesses: 1-800-829-4933

-- Customer Service Phone: 1-215-516-2000, M-F, 0600-2300 (EST)

-- Customer Service Fax: 1-215-516-2555

-- Refund Inquiries: 1-800-829-1954

-- TeleTax: 1-800-829-4477

-- ITINS after 30 days: 1-215-516-4846

-- Exempt Organization Help Desk: 1-877-829-5500

-- Tax Offset Program (TOP) Help Desk: 1-800-304-3107

-- E-Services Help Desk: 1-512-416-7750

The Fax Service cannot be used to transmit your tax return.

MAILING ADDRESSES

The Philadelphia Service Center services all Overseas filers, including military personnel stationed abroad:

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19255-0215

For Courier Service:

PHILADELPHIA SERVICE CENTER

11601 ROOSEVELT BLVD
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19154

ITIN - to obtain an ITIN:
IRS Philadelphia Service Center
ITIN Unit
P.O. Box 447
Bensalem, PA 19020

URGENT TAX NEEDS

For Collection/Levy Status Accounts Problems:

- Phone: 1-215-516-2004
- Fax: 1-215-516-6931

Taxpayer Advocate Office
-- Phone: 1-215-516-2499
-- Fax: 1-215-516-2677
-- Toll-Free 1-877-777-4778

INTERNATIONAL TAXPAYER ADVOCATE SERVICE

San Patricio Office Center, Room 200
7 Tabomico Street
Guaynabo, Puerto Rico 00966
Phone: 787-622-8931
Fax: 787-622-8933

Fake IRS Email - Scam Alert

We have learned of a phishing email scam that attempts to convince the user that it is from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) by using a spoofed "From" address of "tax-refunds@irs.gov". Upon clicking on the link provided in the email, the user is taken to a fraudulent site that looks like a legitimate U.S. government site. The user is then asked to provide personal information, such as their social security, credit card and bank pin numbers. Do not enter any data; do not respond to this fraudulent email.

The US Computer Emergency Response Team (US-CERT) encourages users to take the following measures to protect themselves from this type of phishing attack: Do not follow unsolicited web links received in email messages and be sure to contact your financial institution

immediately if you believe your account/and or financial information has been compromised.

For additional information on ways to avoid phishing email attacks, US-CERT recommends that all users review "Avoiding Social Engineering and Phishing Attacks" at <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-014.html>. Information is also available on Spoofed/Forged Emails at http://www.cert.org/tech_tips/email_spoofing.html.

NEW VISA INFORMATION SERVICE EFFECTIVE MARCH 30

On March 30, 2006, the U.S. Mission in Bolivia commenced a new visa information service. Persons seeking information on U.S. visa services and requirements, including scheduling a visa appointment, must use this service. This requirement also applies to U.S. citizens inquiring on behalf of their non-U.S. citizen family members or others wishing to travel to the U.S. Case-specific queries, such as why a particular visa was refused, should still be directed to the U.S. Embassy Consular Section at CONSULARLAPAZ@STATE.GOV. For further details on the new Visa Information Service, please consult our Web site at [HTTP://LAPAZ.USEMBASSY.GOV/ENGLISH/CONSULAR/NIV/NIVVISASERV.HTM](http://LAPAZ.USEMBASSY.GOV/ENGLISH/CONSULAR/NIV/NIVVISASERV.HTM). As noted in the Consular Information Sheet, U.S. citizens seeking information on Bolivian visa services and requirements should consult the Bolivian Immigration Web site at [HTTP://WWW.MIGRACION.GOV.BO](http://WWW.MIGRACION.GOV.BO) (please note that the Web site is in Spanish).

ALL NON-IMMIGRANT VISA QUERIES SHOULD BE MADE DIRECTLY TO VISA INFORMATION SERVICE CALL CENTER

Any and all requests for non-immigrant visa (i.e. visas for tourism or other short trips to the United States) information/guidance/advice or other non-immigrant visa queries must be directed to the Visa Information Service Call Center described above or, if case-specific, to the Visa Unit at the U.S. Embassy in La Paz at consularlapaz@state.gov. We have received several complaints from consular agency customers that they received incorrect visa information. Please note that we have instructed the consular agencies since August 2005 to refer all visa queries directly to the visa unit at the U.S. Embassy in La Paz and, since the Visa Information Services Call Center commenced operations on March 30, 2006, to that Call Center. The consular agencies have posters outside their

offices for the Visa Information Services Call Center and corresponding reference cards. Other than the information on how to contact the Visa Information Services Call Center, no ACS employee including at the consular agencies is authorized or trained to handle visa queries. Instead, those queries must be directed to the Visa Information Services Call Center or to the Visa Unit at the U.S. Embassy in La Paz as described in the prior paragraph.

For information regarding immigrant visas, please see our website at <http://lapaz.usembassy.gov/english/consular/immigrantvisas.htm>

HOURS AND RANGE FOR CONSULAR SERVICES AT U.S. CONSULAR AGENCY IN SANTA CRUZ AND COCHABAMBA

Effective October 24, 2005, the U.S. Consular Agency in Santa Cruz expanded its public hours. U.S. citizens and others seeking non-visa consular services may come to the U.S. Consular Agency in Santa Cruz Monday from 9:00AM to 12:30PM and 2:00PM to 5:00PM as well as Tuesday through Friday from 9:00AM to 12:30PM, except U.S. and local holidays.

The U.S. Consular Agency in Cochabamba is currently open to the public Monday through Friday from 9:00AM to Noon, except U.S. and local holidays. We will advise U.S. citizens and other consular customers through this newsletter of any scheduled changes in those hours.

Please note that the consular agencies provide only certain American Citizen Services, such as receiving applications for passports and consular reports of birth abroad that are then forwarded to the U.S. Embassy in La Paz for adjudication and processing. This includes applications for emergency passports. Consular agencies may receive such applications but are not authorized to approve the applications or issue passports. Instead, all passport applications including emergency ones must be sent to La Paz for processing, adjudication by the consular officer, printing of approved passport applications and return to the consular agency.

For visa information or assistance, please consult our Web site at www.bolivia.usembassy.gov and/or contact the Visa Information Services Call Center described above. If after reviewing the information on our Web site and conferring with the Visa Information Services Call Center you still have specific visa questions, please

contact the Visa Unit at consularlapaz@state.gov. Questions concerning American Citizen Services that cannot be answered by the information on the Web site or the consular agencies may be directed to the American Citizen Services Unit at USCit.Services.Bolivia@gmail.com.

HOURS FOR AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES IN LA PAZ EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 1, 2006

Effective February 1, 2006, in order to better respond to our customers and provide enhanced consular services the American Citizen Services Unit will be open in the afternoons only Monday through Thursday, from 1:30PM to 5:00PM, and Fridays from 8:30AM to 12:30PM and 2:00PM to 4:00PM, except U.S. and local holidays. This change will better accommodate school age children, who need to appear in person to apply for new passports, and other clients. To avoid common impediments to quicker processing (such as incorrectly done photographs and insufficient documents), please first check the requirements of the relevant service at <http://lapaz.usembassy.gov/english/consular/ACS.htm>.

Please note that Federal benefits checks and IRS refund checks, when those arrive, are now distributed by the consular cashier at Window 5 and not the American Citizen Services Unit window. Federal check recipients may wish to come on Friday mornings to collect their checks given that most banks, including the Banco Bisa office at the U.S. Embassy, tend to be open in the mornings and close in the early afternoon. As noted above, until we hire and SSA trains a new ACS Assistant to handle Federal Benefits queries please direct all such queries to the Federal Benefits Unit in Buenos Aires where SSA employees can provide more immediate assistance.

RENEWING U.S. DRIVERS LICENSES WHILE OUTSIDE THE U.S.

If you find that your U.S. state drivers license is about to expire and you would like to have it renewed, you should contact the DMV office in the state where your current license was issued. Some states will allow you to renew your license while overseas, others will not.

A good place to start your search for information on this process is <http://www.dmv.org>. From there you can link to your state's DMV office website which usually posts information on procedures for renewing your license. Although the U.S. Mission has no role in the

renewal process, we can notarize certain documents for you if required by your state for renewal. See below for more information on notarial services that we can and cannot provide.

NOTARIAL SERVICES – WHAT WE CAN AND CANNOT PROVIDE

We have included the following information in our monthly newsletters since September 2005 and also conveyed this to the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Because we still receive requests from U.S. citizens to legalize/certify/notarize/stamp documents for use in Bolivia and/or for other notarial services that we legally cannot provide, we are repeating this information on notarial services.

In accordance with U.S. law and regulations, the Consular Section may provide certain notarial services in connection with documents to be used in the United States. Documents for use in Bolivia must be processed by Bolivian authorities, even if the documents originate in the U.S. The Consular Section has advised the Bolivian authorities that we accordingly will not certify documents for use other than in the U.S. Therefore, U.S. citizens who wish to present in Bolivia their U.S. birth, marriage, death or other civil documents should have those translated in the U.S. and authenticated by the nearest Bolivian Consul. Similarly, U.S. citizens wishing to marry in Bolivia and who require “certificates of singleness” may query the relevant Bolivian Civil Registry office to clarify how that requirement may be met. Some civil registry offices accept a sworn statement in front of a Bolivian judge. Please contact the relevant Bolivian Civil Registry Office for further details. For more information on notarial services provided by the Consular Section, please check our Web site at <http://lapaz.usembassy.gov/english/consular/ACS.htm>. For information on how to authenticate documents in the U.S., please consult the Department of State Office of Authentications Web site, <http://www.state.gov/m/a/auth/>.

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS

The Department of State has asked all overseas offices to ensure that private U.S. citizens realize the need to make their own contingency plans to respond to a possible influenza pandemic. Such contingency planning would include obtaining influenza vaccines, which the USG cannot provide for private U.S. citizens and/or their dependents. For further details, please consult the Avian Influenza Fact Sheet and the related Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) published by the

Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, at http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1181.html.

INTERNET EMAIL ADDRESS EXCLUSIVELY FOR AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

In order to facilitate communication with U.S. citizens, we have established an Internet email address exclusively for American Citizen Services. That email is USCit.Services.Bolivia@gmail.com. Please note that "American Citizen Services" does not include visa queries or any matters related to U.S. visas. Visa questions should continue to be sent to consularlapaz@state.gov. Emails received at the American Citizen Services Gmail account that do not clearly concern American Citizen Services may be deleted without a response.

NO MORE AMENDMENTS IN U.S. PASSPORTS – ADDING VISA PAGES STILL PERMITTED

Because we have recently received requests to amend passports, we are reiterating the following information provided in prior newsletters. We regret that the passport amendment information now on our Web site is not current; we are working with the Webmaster to correct that.

As announced by the Department of State on September 19, 2005 and also conveyed through the Embassy's warden system, effective September 26, 2005, as an additional security enhancement, all U.S. passport offices will no longer amend valid passports. Instead, customers requesting name changes, extension of validity for limited passports, or correction of a printing error will apply for replacement passports. These applications may be submitted at the U.S. Embassy in La Paz or through the U.S. consular agencies in Santa Cruz and/or Cochabamba.

If the change is *within one year after issuance*, customers will submit a U.S. Passport Re-Application Form (DS 5504), together with the passport that needs the change, the documentation required, and new passport pictures. There will be no charge for routine processing. Please note that this form may be used only for passports to be printed in the U.S. Emergency passport requests must be submitted on form DS-11 or form DS-82; please read and follow the instructions on those forms to ensure that the proper form is used.

If the change is *more than one year after issuance*, customers will need to submit an Application for Passport By Mail (DS-82), together

with the passport that needs the change, the documentation required, and new pictures. The cost includes the \$55 application fee and \$12 security surcharge, for a total of \$67 for routine processing. Because minor children are not eligible to use this form, changes in children's passports will need to be submitted using the DS-11 form and paying the related consular fees. Of course, if the requested data change is due to a printing error by Passport Services, there will be no charge.

Those only needing to add visa pages to their passports will submit an Application for Additional Visa Pages (DS-4085). This service is always free of charge when routine. Please note that for any passport services for children under age 14, including adding visa pages, the parental consent requirements apply. For more information on these requirements, please consult the Department of State, Consular Affairs, website at www.travel.state.gov or the U.S. Embassy website, <http://bolivia.usembassy.gov>.

All of these forms are available online at www.travel.state.gov. The Passport Amendment/Validation Form (DS-19), previously used to amend passports, will no longer be valid. For more information on applying for a U.S. passport, forms, and a wealth of other international travel information, please visit the Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs website at www.travel.state.gov.

EMERGENCY PASSPORTS

Emergency passports are issued in cases of genuine emergencies that require urgent travel. Consular agencies may receive such applications but are not authorized to approve the applications or issue passports. Instead, all passport applications including emergency ones must be sent to La Paz for processing, adjudication by the consular officer, printing of approved emergency passport applications and return to the consular agency.

Because of the immediate need for a passport in case of genuine emergencies, the emergency passports have a limited validity of, at most, one year and are limited to 24 pages. Emergency passports cannot be extended nor can another emergency passport be issued to replace an emergency passport. Visa pages will not be added to an emergency passport. As soon as possible, the emergency passport should be replaced immediately by applying for a full validity passport and including original evidence of U.S. citizenship and identity if that evidence was not presented with the emergency passport application. The application for a full validity passport to replace the emergency

one must be done within one year from the emergency passport's issuance date in order not to incur new application charges.

The Department of State recently began pilot production of the new Emergency Photo-Digitized Passports (EPDPs). Current plans are for all emergency passports to be issued in the EPDP format by the end of 2006. The EPDP is a twelve-page emergency U.S. passport intended to replace machine readable and other emergency passports that are currently issued. The EPDP is not an E-passport and has no circuitry in it, although the page designs are based on those used in the new E-passport.

Regular passports are normally received within 15 calendar days after the U.S. Embassy receives the application then forwarded via DHL to the nearest Consular Agency (Cochabamba and Santa Cruz) or kept at the American Citizen Services office in La Paz for collection. More information may be found at

<http://lapaz.usembassy.gov/english/consular/ACS.htm>

CURRENT TRAVEL INFORMATION

For the most current travel warnings, public announcements, and other travel information published by the Department of State, such as the Consular Information Sheet for Bolivia issued April 4, please go directly to www.travel.state.gov. To receive this information automatically, please register through the Internet-Based Registration System (IBRS) at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>. More information on IBRS is provided below.

INTERNET-BASED REGISTRATION SYSTEM

U.S. citizens who travel or reside abroad can now register a record of their trip or residence so that the Department of State and/or nearby Embassy or Consulate can communicate with and assist citizens in case of an emergency. Registration is now online, and can be accessed at:

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>. If you are already registered with us, please re-register online so that we can update our records. Through this secure, online registration system, citizens can register and update their contact information on the Internet at any time. The website also provides citizens with up-to-date travel information customized to their unique itinerary. The data citizens provide is secured behind Department of State firewalls, accessed only by cleared personnel in Embassies, Consulates, and the Department of

State, and releasable only with the U.S. citizen's permission under the provisions of the Privacy Act.

UPCOMING HOLIDAYS AND OTHER CLOSURES

Please note that the Embassy will be closed on the following official holidays during 2006.

A - American Holiday, L - Local Holiday

September 4 (Monday)	US Labor Day	A
October 9 (Monday)	Columbus Day	L
November 2 (Thursday)	All Saints' Day	L
November 10 (Friday)	Veterans' Day	A
November 23 (Thursday)	Thanksgiving	A
December 25 (Monday)	Christmas	A/L

OTHER INTERNET ADDRESSES OF INTEREST TO U.S. CITIZENS

U.S. Federal Government: <http://www.firstgov.gov>

U.S. Department of State, Consular Affairs: <http://travel.state.gov>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: <http://www.dhs.gov>

U.S. Federal Aviation Administration: <http://www.faa.gov>

U.S. Internal Revenue Service: <http://www.irs.gov>

Social Security Administration: <http://www.ssa.gov>; SSA Newsletter: www.ssa.gov/enews/

U.S. Selective Service: <http://www.sss.gov>.

Federal Voting Assistance: <http://www.fvap.gov>

U.S. Customs & Border Protection: <http://www.cbp.gov> (for information including importation of household pets, animal and plant

health inspection, etc)

U.S. Department of Agriculture: <http://www.usda.gov> (for information on food products, food safety and inspection service).

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<http://lapaz.usembassy.gov/english/consular/ACS.htm>